

# KIDS VOTING VOICE

★ SPRING 2011 ★

## A Transforming Experience



*Not every student who signs on for Youth at the Booth is motivated by civic enthusiasm. However most find it a transforming experience, as this "first person" report attests.*

*The following account was written by Shahani Samarasekera, a graduating senior from Dublin Coffman High School.*

### Waste of 15 hours?

Youth at the Booth was not something I was really looking forward to. When we signed up for it in AP Government class, I really just thought it was going to be an easy way to get out of my political participation requirement for fall quarter, and that it would be a waste of 15 hours.

I arrived on Election Day scared to be around people I had never met before, anxious to see if the training on how to run the voting machines had really stuck with me, but more than anything, I was sleepy from waking up at 4 a.m. Scared, anxious and sleepy: not exactly the perfect way to start your morning.

### At government's root

As the day progressed, I began to realize what a big thing a little high school senior like me was part of. I was at the root where government in the U.S. begins.

It is through voting that all the 500 or so people who came in to that church to vote were able to have their voices heard. You see, voting is really the equivalent of a big old scream right in the face of our leaders.

### We have a voice

Voting is what shows politicians that even though we may not be in charge, we do have a voice, and more than anything, voting forces politicians to listen.

And throughout the day, I got to help with that. I got to deliver these screams right to the politicians and it actually felt good!

So it may have been a 15 hour work day, and by the end of it I may have been slightly delirious with aching feet and a malfunctioning brain, but that experience is one I would never change.

### Voting is key

Watching all those people waiting in such long lines, wrangling



**Lexus Corbin prepares voting machine for a Gahanna voter.**

with their kids, filling out ballots, it showed me how important the vote is to American citizens, and how important it is that the politicians hear them.

I want to work the polls again because I know that is where everyday people can change the world and form it into a better place. All it takes is a kid willing to step up and assume the responsibilities of a United States Citizen.



**Youth at the Booth poll workers Sydney Weldon and Lynsie Manot take a quick dinner break between assisting voters in Hilliard**

## INSIDE



2011 Scholarship Winners

## CITIZENSHIP SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

### Stand out citizens

Two outstanding young citizens were selected this year to receive \$1,000 scholarships from the Kids Voting board of directors: Brittany Bower, Groveport Madison High School and Jacob Coate, Westerville Central High School. Both students have been active members of the Kids Voting Youth Council, and assisted voters through Youth at the Booth.

### Brittany Bower, Groveport Madison

Through Kids Voting Brittany shadowed a candidate for the Ohio House of Representatives and then, after he was elected, attend meetings with him, including the Governor's State of the State address.

Brittany is the vice-president of National Honor Society, manager of the Girls Track and Field team and organizer of the senior class trip to Washington, D.C., the "Support Our Troops Week" and many other activities.

She will study Political Science next year at Denison University.

### Jacob Coate, Westerville Central

Kids Voting is only one of the venues where Jacob's civic efforts have been recognized; he is a senior class officer and active in many school service projects.

Jacob commented that Kids Voting "instilled in me the need to stay up on current events, and the importance of civic participation at an early age."

He has been accepted into the Political Science and Pre-Law Scholars Program at The Ohio State University.

## HUSTED HONORS COUNCIL

Members of the Kids Voting Youth Council received commendations for civic service from Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted. The Secretary praised the students for their interest in government and politics and also gave them an overview of the challenges of redrawing congressional and state legislative districts, a process that will be undertaken this year as a result of the 2010 U.S. Census results.



George Bolden III, Youth Council Member, accepts a commendation from Secretary Husted

## NEW CITIZENS REGISTERED TO VOTE

Thirteen seniors from Hamilton Township High School demonstrated great civic spirit as they attended the May Naturalization Ceremony and then registered Ohio's newest American citizens to vote. At the event 125 individuals from 27 countries were sworn in as citizens. The Kids Voting high school registrars attended the event on their first day of summer vacation, having completed their senior year only a few days before the ceremony.

Keynote speaker at the event was Dr. Jeffrey Wadsworth, President and CEO of Battelle, the largest private research organization in the world. Dr. Wadsworth shared his experiences as a native of England, having lived all over the world before becoming a U.S. citizen in 1985.



Hamilton Township senior, Brandon Muller, registers a new citizen to vote.

## HONOR ROLL

### Profile

#### Board Member focuses on kids

Kate Logsdon, Vice President/  
Senior Private Banker at Fifth  
Third Bank, has served actively on  
the board of Kids Voting Central  
Ohio since 2008.

Kate currently serves on the  
Executive Committee of the  
board and has chaired the board's  
Scholarship Committee since it  
was created in 2009.

Kate created the Scholarship  
application and evaluation  
process and has presided over the  
selection of the recipients of the

six \$1,000 scholarships awarded  
by Kids Voting over the past three  
years.

Kate has also been influential  
in getting Fifth Third Bank to  
financially support Kids Voting,  
and has fielded a strong foursome  
in each of the Kids Voting Golf  
Outings.

Kate lives in Hilliard with her  
husband and two sons.



#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S

### Note

We bid farewell to four individuals  
who, combined, have contributed  
over three decades of service to  
Kids Voting and even more to the  
students of central Ohio. District  
Curriculum Coordinators, Carolyn  
Seitz (Canal Winchester) and Rae  
Harriot White (Gahanna), have  
been integral since the founding of  
Kids Voting Central Ohio in 2000.  
They have been a constant source  
of support for our efforts within  
their districts spreading the word  
of civic education and Kids Voting.

We also are losing two exceptional  
high school teachers who have

served as extraordinary role  
models - retiring Government  
teachers, Cathy Griffin  
(Whetstone HS) and Mark  
Matthews (Big Walnut HS).  
These individuals have inspired  
and led hundreds of students to  
become active citizens and will be  
missed by Kids Voting.

Good luck to Carolyn, Cathy and  
Mark in retirement and Rae in her  
new job!

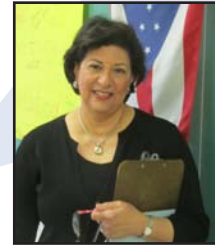
*Jeff Cabot, Executive Director*



Carolyn Seitz



Rae Harriot White



Cathy Griffin



Mark Matthews

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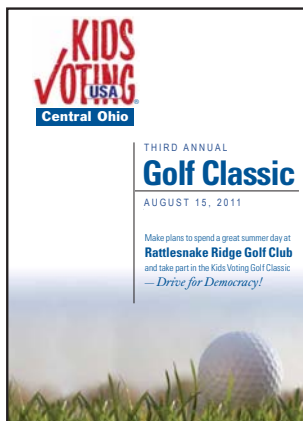
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[www.KidsVotingOH.org](http://www.KidsVotingOH.org)

FOR MORE PHOTOS, INFORMATION ABOUT KIDS VOTING, OR TO CONTRIBUTE, PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE.



60 E. Broad St., 3rd Floor  
Columbus, Ohio 43215



Go to [www.KidsVotingOH.org](http://www.KidsVotingOH.org)  
for sign up information!

614-224-3555 ★ [www.KidsVotingOH.org](http://www.KidsVotingOH.org)

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